

Amendments to the Drawings

Attached are two new sheets of drawings that include FIGS. 5 and 6 showing a slidable ball valve 32' in accordance with the elected species. The new sheets comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d).

Applicants also submit herewith four replacement sheets of drawings of FIGS. 1-4 that are to replace the informal drawings of FIGS. 1-4 filed with the application. No other changes have been made. The replacement sheets comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(d).

Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 1-56 are pending in the application, with 1, 12-14, 16, 22, 38, 40, 42 and 53 being the independent claims. In response to the election of species, claims 5-7 and 43-45 are withdrawn from consideration pending the allowance of generic claims 1 and 22. Please note that Applicants have withdrawn claim 5 in accordance with the Examiner's reasoning provided in paragraph 1 of the Office Action for the withdrawal of claim 43. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Amendments to the Specification

Applicants have amended the specification to include reference to new FIGS. 5 and 6, as well as to update various references to co-pending patent applications. Support for the slidable ball valve and seal arrangements shown in FIGS. 5 and 6 is found throughout the specification with certain features being found in U.S. Pat. Appl. Pub. Nos. US 2005/0022883 A1 and/or US 2003/0082427 A1, which were incorporated by reference in their entireties into the specification.

Objections to the Drawings

The Examiner objected to the drawings as not showing every feature of the claimed invention. Particularly, the Examiner requested that the slidable ball valve with

an o-ring as an outer sealing member, as claimed in claim 11, be shown or canceled from the claim. Applicants submit herewith new Figures 5 and 6 that show a slidable ball (32') valve with an o-ring (44) as an outer sealing member. No new matter has been added by these figures, and support for the figures is found throughout the specification with certain features being found in US 2005/0022883 and/or US 2003/0082427, as mentioned above. In addition, Applicants submit herewith formal drawings, *i.e.*, replacement sheets, of Figures 1-4. No other changes have been made to these figures.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 11 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. The Examiner pointed to a lack of antecedent basis in each of claims 11 and 15 that could be corrected by changing the dependency of the claims. In accordance with the Examiner's recommendation, claim 11 was amended to depend from claim 10 and claim 15 was amended to depend from claim 14 rendering moot this rejection.

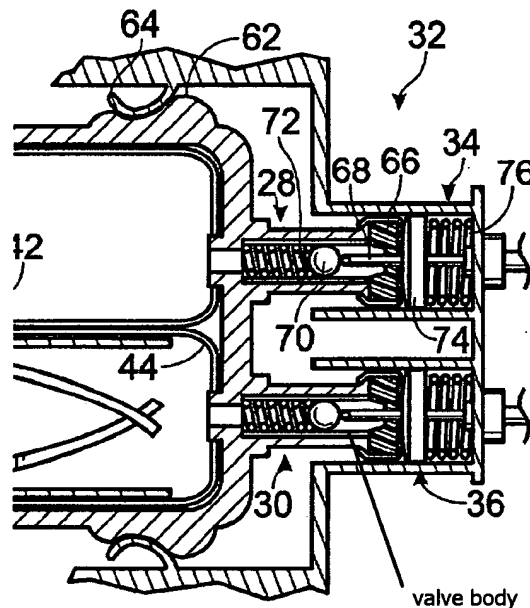
Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-5, 8-10, 16-32, 34-37 and 46-51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by US 2003/0082427 to Prasad *et al.* The Examiner states in paragraph 6 of the Office Action that

Prasad discloses a fuel supply including an outer casing 22, an inner liner 40, a valve including a valve body 30, a slidable body 70 that is biased by spring 72 to a valve seat 66, wherein the inlet pipe to the valve [is] connect[ed] to the liner as shown in figure 2, and the base valve housing is integrally connected to 22 as shown in figure 2.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejection of the claims based on Prasad. Applicants will discuss the patentability of each of independent claims

1, 16 and 22 below. With reference to independent claim 1, Prasad does not disclose a valve body connected to an opening of both the liner and the casing. The valve body is the member that encloses the slidable body. As shown in Prasad's FIG. 2, the valve body, which is not labeled in Prasad but is annotated in the partial reproduction below, is disposed within an opening of outlet 28, 30 of outer casing 22 but is not in contact with any part of inner container 42, 44.



However, to move the case to allowance, claim 1 has been amended to recite that “the valve body is attached to an opening in the inner liner and to an opening in the outer casing.” As such, claim 1 is not taught or suggested by Prasad and is patentable over this reference. Claims 2-4, and 8-10 depend from and add further features to independent claim 1 and are patentable over Prasad for this reason alone. While it is not necessary to address the Examiner’s rejections of these claims at this time, Applicants reserve the right to support their patentability, when necessary.

With reference to independent claim 16, the Examiner does not point to any teaching in Prasad that anticipates an “inner liner [that] is made from a fluorinated polymer” as recited in the claim. Further, Applicants have thoroughly read the Prasad publication and do not find any disclosure of such a feature. As such, claim 16 is not taught or suggested by Prasad and is patentable over this reference. Claims 17-21 depend from and add further features to independent claim 16 and are patentable over Prasad for this reason alone. While it is not necessary to address the Examiner’s rejections of these claims at this time, Applicants reserve the right to support their patentability, when necessary.

With reference to independent claim 22, the Examiner does not point to any teaching in Prasad that anticipates “at least one of the members [being] compatible with methanol” as recited in the claim. The disclosure of Prasad is directed to a hydrogen fuel cell with only a mention that it may be applied to a methanol fuel cell. *See* Prasad, ¶25. Although Prasad specifies that the materials to be used in conjunction with first and second liners 42 and 44 are to be “non-brittle, impermeable and chemically stable to the fuel[, i.e., hydrogen]” (Prasad, ¶28), there is no teaching or suggestion as to what materials are to be selected to solve the problems associated with the storage of a methanol fuel. Further, there is no teaching or suggestion in Prasad as to the materials to be used for the valve body and slidable body members, or as to the desirability of having either of these members made from a material that is “compatible with methanol.” However in order to move the case to allowance, claim 22 has been amended to recite that “each of the members [*i.e.*, the liner, valve body and slidable body members] is compatible with methanol.” As such, claim 22 is not taught or suggested by Prasad and is patentable over this reference. Claims 23-32, 34-37 and 46-51 depend from and add

further features to independent claim 22 and are patentable over Prasad for this reason alone. While it is not necessary to address the Examiner's rejections of these claims at this time, Applicants reserve the right to support their patentability, when necessary.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Prasad in view of U.S. Patent No. 3,206,982 to Blondfield. Claim 11 depends from and adds further features to independent claim 1 and is patentable over this combination of references for this reason alone, as Blondfield does not make up for the deficiencies of Prasad. While it is not necessary to address the Examiner's rejection of this claim at this time, Applicants reserve the right to support its patentability, when necessary.

Claims 12-15, 33, 38-42 and 52-56

Claims 12-14, 33, 38-42 and 52-56 are objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim, but allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter and have rewritten claims 12-14, 38, 40, 42 and 53 in independent form to place them in condition for allowance. Claims 15 (which was amended to address the 112 issue), 39, 41, and 54-56 depend from claims 14, 38, 40 and 53 respectively and are patentable for at least this reason.

Claims 33 and 52 still depend either directly or indirectly from independent claim 22 and are in condition for allowance based on the arguments made above with reference to the independent claim.

Other Matters

Claims 23, 26, 29, 31 and 50 were amended to correct informalities or antecedent basis issues in the claims and not for reasons related to the patentability of the claims.

Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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